Story of the First Bummer

May 5- 57

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Along about 1855, a boy was picked up on the streets of New York City by the ladies engaged in the commendable and charitable work of gathering together such waifs as had no home or friends. These they placed in their charitable home or school, known as the "Five Points School." This boy was retained there until a home was found for him with a farmer in Tazewell County, Illinois, just prior to the Civil War.

At the organization of Company B, 73rd Illinois, he was enlisted as a drummer in the company as William D. Rodgers. He was about 15 or 16 years old, and a very bright, active boy, who made friends of all with whom he came in contact. He apparently came of Irish parents, and possessed an unusual degree of that quick wit for which the Irish are famous. He soon became a great favorite in his company, for he was one of its most liberal-hearted and congenial members. He always spoke of himself as "Poor Bum," and soon came to be known as "Bum Rodgers."

Dorothy J. Clark

Old Irish Song.

He often sang an Irish song, of which, "Bummers, beware! and snoozers, take care!" was the closing line of each verse. In answer to the question as to where he learned the song, he explained that, when a "bummer" in New York, they had among themselves as street gamins a sort of organization for mutual protection against the raids that were made upon them by the police and others who were wont to annoy them, and often disturb and break their rest at night in their usual haunts in empty boxes, barrels, hogsheads, etc. One of their number was always placed on guard to give the alarm at the approach of the enemy, and this song was used as a signal. The last words of each verse, "Bummers, beware! and snoozers, take care!" would be followed by a general stampede.

From his frequent use of these words, he very soon came to be known in the Regiment as "Company B's bummer," and before long this name had attached itself to the other musicians of the company, then spread to musicians of the other companies of the left wing, and very soon to all musicians of the regiment. By degrees it became customary to apply it to company cooks, hostlers, teamsters, hospital nurses, and orderlies about headquarters, and by the spring of 1864, it had become a comon name for all persons who did not actually carry arms and do duty in the ranks. This was true not only in the 73rd, but in other regiments of the brigade and division.

Everyone a "Bummer."

From that time on, old comrades who were in the Atlanta campaign could remember how common the name became, and how it was applied to every man who was away from his command, no matter for how short a time. The pioneers were "Bummers;" the man who fell out of ranks on a march was a "Bummer;" the foragers, above all others, were "Bummers," and Bum Rodgers was admitted by all who knew him to be the "King Bee" in the swarm of bumming foragers. So when the army left Atlanta on its famous "March to the Sea," and the entire marching column became foragers, it was only natural that they should all become "Bummers," and with the training they had received from Bum Rodgers and his associates, were very successful, and no history of the Civil War is complete in which "Sherman's Bummers" do not have a very prominent place.

Rodgers' exploits as a "bummer" in the army would make a very interesting as well as a very large volume. He could pass the most vigilant guard ever placed around a camp, could beat the most expert provost-marshal that ever signed or approved a pass. When captured at Chickamauga with Will Jaquess, who was an enlisted musician, he went boldly to the rebel officer in charge of the guard, represented that Will was a civilian, son of the colonel, who was only on a visit to his father, and therefore not liable to be held as a prisoner of war; and his statement seemed so honest, and his demand so forcibly put, that the officer passed Will through the lines without further evidence.

"Bum" was sent to prison in Richmond, where he feigned rheumatism and played his part so well that he was soon exchanged and returned to his company.

Caught But Once.

He was caught but once in all his foraging expeditions. Gen. McCook and staff happened to ride along while "Bum" was appropriating the contents of a very heavy bee-gum tree. He had conquered the bees when he was caught, and, without ceremony, he was taken in charge by a staff officer. He asked to be allowed to speak to the General, to whom he represented his case in such a favorable light that he was at once released, and soon marched into camp with the full contents of the bee-gum. He was an expert "chuck-a-luck" player, so he accumulated several hundred dollars. This was sent to his friends in Illinois for him, and there it awaited him upon his return from the army.

G. W. Patten, in his "History of the Seventy-third Illinois Volunteer Infantry" known as the "Preacher and Persimmon Regiment," once said about Rodgers: "He was, without doubt, the original "bummer" of Sherman's army, justly entitled to the honor of having originated the name in the army, and if half the reports were true, should Bum Rodgers meet with any of the readers of this, in the hereafter, they might well say: 'Bummers, beware! snoozers, take care!' "

"Bum Rodgers was a good soldier, and did faithfully and well all duty assigned him, and was withal a warm-hearted, generous comrade. He was always the leader of his mess—whether for good or evil—a polished gentleman in genteel society, and a hail-fellow at all times."

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Civil War Diary Follows Illinois 30th Volunteers

TERRE HAUTE TRIB 10-24-71

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

The Civil War diary of his grandfather Franklin Z. Winters was loaned to me by Rogers Winters, of 2235 N. 11th St.

In the latter part of June, 1862, Franklin Z. Winters acquired two notebooks in a store in LaGrange, Tenn. while encamped there. One was used to record "interesting events which transpired between that time and the Britton Lane fight, at which time I lost the book." Winters had better luck with the second journal. He pencilled in a few items from memory and continued his entries through the war until June 29, 1865, nearly four years of travel and soldiering.

"On 12th day of Aug., 1861, we organized a company at Robinson, Crawford county, Illinois, electing Thomas G. Markley, Captain; Michael Langton, 1st Lieut.; and Geo. LeGordon, 2nd Lieut.

"On 20th day of Aug., 1861, we started for Camp Butler and were sworn in U.S. service on 27th for term of three years. I was there elected corporal . . . regiment organized and on 30th we left for Cairo." Company D numbered 86 men in the 30th Regt. commanded by Col. P. B. Foulk of 850 men.

On the 6th of November, the 22nd, 27th and 31st Illinois and the 7th Iowa (2,850 men) embarked on steamers with Taylor's Battery, small detachment of cavalry with two gunboats, the Tyler and Lexington.

Next day they landed three miles above Columbus on the Missouri side of the Mississippi River and took up a line of march down river. This land force was under General Grant.

Dorothy Clark

In the Battle of Belmont, the 30th Regt. lost 10 killed, 28 wounded. Company D lost Major Thomas McClerkin and Capt. F. G. Markley, plus six wounded.

On their return to Cairo, they erected new barracks and went to winter quarters on Dec. 6th.

The hardships of the winter of 1861 began with the "Ky. March" or "Hay Scout," 12 days of marching through the mud and the severe cold over rough, hilly country. This toughened up the hardy men and killed off or ruined the health of the weaker ones.

A few weeks later the winter campaign began again when the regiment left for Fort Henry. After its capture, marching orders were received to proceed against rebel Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River. The 30th Ill. Regt. was in the worst of the battle from beginning to end. Their flag was the first flown over the courthouse of Dover, and theirs was the first U.S. flag over Fort Donelson and its garrison. With the 31st Ill., the regiment remained in Dover until April 21 when they were removed to Pittsburgh Landing and put in Logan's Brigade. Corporal Winters was ill in the hospital and left behind. After a short furlough he returned to the regiment in May 1862.

A detailed map is necessary to follow the movements of the 30th Ill. from April on. They marched to Corinth, Miss., Purdy, Bolivar, on the Mobile & Ohio Railroad where they took the cars to Jack-

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Dorothy Clark

Continued From Page 4.

son, Tenn., next to Brownsville in wagons. Near this place occurred the Battle of Britton Lane, a bloody battle against rebel cavalry forces. Reinforced the next morning, they marched on to relieve the 18th Ill. and "spent the day procuring pork and sweet potatoes and making ourselves comfortable.

On Nov. 15, 1862, they were relieved by the 23rd Indiana and went foraging filling 75 wagons with corn and fodder. They built a mud and stick chimney to their tent, also

Christmas in Camp

In December in Holly Springs, Abbeville, Miss., on the Tallahatchee River and Oxford, Miss., the men were allowed fresh meat if they did not fire a gun, so Col. Winter killed a hog with his hatchet. Christmas Eve was spent on the bare camp ground — no tents — next morning his breakfast consisted of a pint of coffee boiled in a tin cup, some hard crackers and cold boiled beef from his knapsack. Christmas dinner was the same with the exception of tea instead of coffee and an addition of parched corn.

A few days later about 100 men of this brigade went out on scout mounted on mules and artillery horses. The chaplain led the van as guide. Altogether they rounded up 75 head of cattle and as many sheep and drove them back into camp safely. "This was a good joke on the Chaplain, stealing sheep on the Sabbath day while the Secesh was away to church."

Some of the men went foraging for corn and made hominy. Communication lines had been cut and the men had no supplies to supplement their half rations so they had to live off the land. They ground rye, coffee and corn on the plantation mills. They received no letters or newspapers, had used their last paper and envelopes, and

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there was none to buy. So ended the year of 1862.

1863 began with marching to different locations on the railroad. The weather went from rain to sleet to snow, so heavy it broke the tent poles. It was so cold much time was devoted to carrying wood for the fires.

By the time Cpl. Winters arrived at Memphis he was blue. "Military discipline is neglected and officers and soldiers are given up to dissipation. Sentinels stand negligently on their posts and let the soldiers pass to and from the grog shops and someone is killed most every day in their drunken riots while others are rendered unfit for duty." It took a dress parade to put things in a more militay form and Cpl. Winters' mood improved. On his 31st birthday Feb. 13, 1863 his army time was half over.

Feb. 20 the men went 300 miles down river to Lake Providence, La. in 12 streamers. He met up with his nephew Wm. Dodds, Co. C, 24th Ind. The months rolled by with repairing the Richmond Road near Vicksburg, the battle hospital work, then several skirmishes and forced marches near Vicksburg.

From Feb. 3 to Mar. 1, 1864 Cpl. Winters did not change clothes. He traveled by boat to Cairo, by train to Camp Butler, 6 miles from Springfield, Ill. and visited friends and relatives, then back to Cairo.

April, 1864 came marching orders and a boat to Paducah, then south on Tennessee River and kept marching south until June he was in Georgia in the Kennesaw Mountain.

On June 27th "I lay on the ground, resting my head on my right hand with my elbow at the root of a large tree. Alex Anderson was in the same position only resting on his left elbow facing me . . . a small piece of shell or shot passed through my right shoulder and grazed him on the under side of his left arm . . . carried to rear . . . wound very painful . . . field hospital . . . then ambulance to Division Hospital . . . tent on cot with husk mattress and good care. In July some 200 wounded were sent to Altona on the railroad. One night 18 wounded men stayed in a dirty railroad boxcar that had been used for mules while the train was switched off on a siding.

While Cpl. Winters was in the hospital, the 30th Ill. took part in the Battle of Atlanta where they lost their colonel and 110 men taken prisoner. Both flags were taken. About 60 killed or wounded. Late in August, 1864, he was recommended for furlough by the division surgeon and left Rome by train via Chattanooga, Louisville, New Albany, Mitchell, Vincennes and Palestine (where he visited his sister) before taking a hack to his home.

On Nov. 13, 1864 he went to Salem, Ind. to attend a wedding and stopped off at Terre Haute on the 14th. "Old Abe's election was being celebrated." Bonfires were built, rockets were shot in the air, amidst the ringing of the bells and the roar of a cannon. A large assemblage was addressed by Dick Thompson and others at the Wigwam.

The news of the end of the war and later Lincoln's assassination were received while Cpl. Winters was in the hospital at Quincy, Ill. On July 10th he received orders to rejoin his regiment at Louisville, and delivered the squad in his charge to convalescent camp at Jeffersonville. He was mustered out of service on July 18, 1865.

On July 27th most all enlisted men of the 30th Ill. were paid off and discharged, but Winters had to go to the paymaster's office at Springfield to clear up miscalculations about his money. This caused Cpl. Winters to have the distinction of being the last man of the 30th Regt. Illinois Volunteer Infantry to be paid off and discharged.

He took the train to Terre Haute, spent the evening with W.L. Draper and his family in their new home, and took the hack to Hutsonville and home after nearly four years of travel and soldiering.

A person standing six feet above sea level can see about three and a quarter miles.

AP Newsfeatures

Clark, Dorothy

Lt. Scott First Vigo Co. Civil War Volunteer

Ts MAY 20 1973
Community Affairs File
History (T.H.) - Civil War

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

In this competitive world in which we live, being first has always been very desirable and newsworthy. When the question arose in 1890 as to exactly who was the first Vigo County man to volunteer in the Civil War, George A. Bettcher, North Liberty, Ind., offered the following information:

"Before and at the beginning of the Civil War, I was a member of an independent military company called the Fort Harrison Guard of Terre Haute. Some time after the Star of the West was fired upon, and before Fort Sumpter was bombarded, the captain of the Fort Harrison Guard, Ogden C. Wood, called a meeting of the company. When the company had assembled at their armory on this call, the captain stated that the object of the meeting was to take a vote on offering Governor Lane our services should a call be made for troops. After forming the company in two ranks, Captain Wood said, 'all in favor of offering Gov. Lane our services should the president call for troops step two paces to the front.' Every man present except one promptly stepped to the front. The one voting in the negative was Mr. Butler Krumbhaar. Capt. Wood said, 'Mr. Krumbhaar, why do you vote in the negative?' Mr. Krumbhaar, raising his right hand, answered, 'for the simple reason why, sir, that if war was declared between the North and the South, I go with the South.'

"This answer caused quite a breeze of excitement in the ranks of the company. Capt. Wood, pointing to the door, said, 'Go,' and Mr. Krumbhaar walked out of the armory. So the tender of our services was sent to the governor and as soon as a call was made for troops a dispatch was sent to the commanding officer of the company ordering us to Indianapolis.

"At the time the dispatch came, Capt. Wood was absent from the city, as was also Lieut. Hamill, I believe. Anyway the dispatch was brought to Lieut. Frank C. Scott, who, with his brother, Samuel C. Scott, was then conducting a book bindery on Main street. It happened that William F. Hickman, Henry A. Hart and myself were at the bookbindery talking with the Scott brothers when the dispatch came to the office. Lieut. Frank C. Scott read it and then, seating himself at a table, drew up an enlistment paper and signed it. The rest of use who were present placed our names below his as follows: Samuel C. Scott, William P. Hickman, Gearge A. Bettcher and Henry a Hart.

DOROTHY J. CLARK

"After we had signed the paper, Lieut. Scott ordered one of us to get the martial band belonging to the company of the armory as quickly as possible. The rest of us went to the armory and opened ed it up, and in a little while the drums and fifes were there and the first war music in Terre Haute began.

"This was all done an hour or two before the Vigo County Guard, another independent military company, had got their armory opened. So, I think I am correct when I say that Captain Frank C. Scott, of the Eleventh Indiana Infantry, Zouave Regiment, who died in Louisiana in 1863, was the first boy to enlist in the War of the Rebellion from Vigo County.

"Our Company C, Eleventh Indiana, Zouaves, was in camp in Indianapolis before Capt. Jonathan Hager's company was recruited. There are those yet living who were members of the old Fort Harrison Guard who can substantiate this statement . . ."

Mr. Bettcher's letter to the local newspaper editor was in answer to an earlier item in the paper which stated: "Davidson Hunter, the first volunteer from Vigo County in the late war, is in the city. Mr. Hunter volunteered in Company F, Fourteenth Indiana Volunteers, under Capt. Jonathan Hager. Since the war he has been residing in Iowa. He is a single man and badly crippled, and is now on his way to the soldiers' home."

Another item in the 1890 newspaper told of the first volunteer in the entire country of the Civil War, who was Dr. Charles F. Rand of Washington, D.C.

According to official war records, in less than 10 minutes after the call for troops by President Lincoln, April 15, 1861, for 75,000 men, the name of Charles F. Rand was enrolled as a soldier. Since there was no record of an earlier enlistment, that honor was given him by consent. He was also the first soldier to win the Congressional Medal of Honor for distinguished gallantry in action. This event occurred at Blackburn's Ford, Virginia, in less than three months after his enlistment. His command was ordered to retreat, and every man obeyed except young Rand, at the time but 18 years old. The rest of his battalion of 500 men was swept in disorder from the field, but Rand held his ground, despite the fact that the field was ploughed by shot and shell all about him. The enemy finally absolutely refused to fire at the boy standing bravely alone and firing at them as coolly as if he had a regiment at his back. Rand then crept across the field and a deep ravine and joined the command of Gen. A. H. Barnum, remaining with them until the end of the engagement.

The Congressional Medal of Honor was not instituted until a year later, and the first one struck off was presented to Rand for his distinguished gallantry on that memorable day at Blackburn's Ford. During the entire Civil War only 1,080 medals of honor were distributed among the Union troops for distinguished gallantry in action.

Dr. Rand's patriotism and gallantry were recognized by two governors of New York and by three presidents. He was twice personally honored by President Lincoln. He lies buried in the most beautiful part of Arlington Cemetery. According to the newspaper article, he was still living in 1907.

Scott family papers show that Samuel Crawford Scott enlisted as a sergeant in Capt. Jesse E. Hamill's Company C, Eleventh Indiana Volunteers, April 18, 1861. He was described as "born in Indiana in 1840, 6 ft. 2 in., light complexion, light eyes, light hair, and by occupation a painter." This document was signed by Lew Wallace, Colonel, Eleventh Indiana.

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From Civil War Diary Of Lt. W. M. Morris

Ts JAN 5 1975 By DOROTHY J. CLARK

So many readers are interested in Civil War diaries I decided to devote the next three Sunday columns to the three volumes written by Lieutenant William M. Morris, 93rd Illinois Volunteers, and loaned to me by his grandson, Dr. Joseph C. Minnis. The diary begins:

"I purpose to chronicle a diary of events which are about to occur incidental to the life of the soldier which I have just entered upon. I shall dwell upon no details not under my personal observation or participated in by my comrades immediately about me. It is for my exclusive gratification hereafter that I pen these lines consquently I shall relate circumstances as they happen and in language which suggests itself to me without studied effort a rhetorical display."

In other words, young Morris planned to tell it how it was (and he did!). On July 14, 1862, he enlisted for three years and helped g— a company together. At the election held in the Brick School House at Camden, Ill., he was chosen First Lieutenant of Company A. The next day they started for camp at Dixon, transferred to Camp Douglas at Chicago, and with six other companies made up the 126th Regiment which was reorganized into the 93rd Regiment.

On Nov. 1, armed with long Enfield rifles, they left Chicago for the "Land of Dixie", and boarded the steamer Tecumseh at Cairo to proceed to Columbus, Ky., and on down river to Memphis where "the population about us are almost unanimously against us and if we conquer them which we eventually shall, we will be compelled to garrison the country the same as if it were wrested from a foreign foe."

DOROTHY J. CLARK

Camped just outside Memphis in tents, Morris reported the weather delightful and "No Union men here, bet your bottom penny on that! Even the women turned from us with a disdainful curl of the lip. But if we are spared awhile we will make them wish us thousands of miles from them."

The 114th Illinois and two more regiments from Iowa and Indiana arrived in their camp.

The men marvelled at the the mild winter during their picket duty.

Lt. Morris took six men and went foraging a few miles beyond the lines. This was only the first of hundreds of such expeditions during the next three years in the army. He reported no enemy, but saw burned bridges contrabands escaping from the bloodhounds of their slave masters and finding wagon loads of provisions including chickens, peaches, barrels of vinegar, cattle, sheep and salt pork.

As the army marched eastward they were enveloped in smoke from burning houses, barns and fences fired by the secesh in their flight. Near Chulahoma, Miss., while repairing the Tallahatchie Bridge, the lieutenant caught cold and prospects were not so bright. He wrote that there had been no newspapers for two weeks and the boys were getting homesick . . . "if they

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Dorothy Clark

Ts JAN 5 1975

Continued From Page 4.

could choose their own course, nine-tenths of them would go home tomorrow . . . In camp we carry water one and a half miles and cut down black-jack saplings for fuel. Dixie Land no longer has poetic meaning just mud, rain, starvation and devastation."

On Dec. 14, camped near Oxford, Miss., he wrote: "Armies should be composed of homeless friendless men whose whole attention and fears could be encircled within a camp ground." It had been five months since he had enlisted and the aspect of the war had not changed yet!

Christmas Day was celebrated by guarding a 62 load forage train on the march back to Memphis. Seven hundred men started the march, and only 136 answered roll call at the end of the march.

New Year's Day, 1863, was spent marching 15 miles from Germantown to Lafayette, Tenn., on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, guarding a supply train. Here they received their first mail in six weeks and the first news of Vicksburg . . . "cheerful hearts and smiling countenances!"

Sometime in January Lt. Morris had obviously written a letter to his home town newspaper The Rock Island Argus and I would certainly like to read what he wrote. On Feb. 6 the Captain of Company A preferred charges against Morris based upon the letter. He resigned his commission the next day, but was persuaded to withdraw the resignation and to stand trial. The court martial decision was in his favor.

On March 2, 1863, the men boarded the steamer Henry Von Phul and proceeded down the Mississippi River to land near the Arkansas-Lousiana line at the bayou plantation of a Rebel General, 20 miles north of Lake Providence. The peach trees were in full bloom, and ten days later they reached Helena, Ark.

On his 26th birthday, April 2, 1863, Morris was on the Tallahatchie River in Mississippi, and he observed, "Little did my mother think 26 years ago that she was only furnishing material for the havoc of war, but so it is."

The next day they went down river with eight other boats.

On April 14, 1863, he observed "Nine months ago today I enlisted, but those nine months have not materially changed the aspect of the war. Vicksburg is now, as it was then the bone of contention of the two armies.

On the 17th, at Millken's Bend, La., he wrote, "At least I can chronicle something important. Last night near midnight Admiral Porter's fleet ran the blockade past the Vicksburg batteries. The cannonading was terrific . . . seeming to shake the very ground. We could see the flashes of the guns plainly as they made a great light along the southeast horizon. Whit the result of this daring feat is we don't yet know . . .

On April 24th they moved 14 miles inland to Richmond, La., then to Carthage below Vicksburg. On May 1 they crossed the Mississippi line and Morris was taken ill in a farm house near Port Gilson. Attended by a Secesh surgeon, he rejoined his regiment at Hawkinson's Ferry.

The first volume ended May 14, 1863, at Jackson, Miss., after a four-hour fight which routed the rebels. They took the cannon and occupied the city . . . his enlistment was now 10 months old. Next week, Volume 2 of Morris' diary . . .

Part II, Civil War Diary Of Lt. William M. Morris

Community Affairs File

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Ta JAN 12 1975

The first 10 months of Lt. William M. Morris' enlistment in the 93rd Illinois Volunteers, Company A, was related in last week's column. This week continues his account.

On May 15, 1863, Morris was marching along the railroad leading to Vicksburg. He confessed, " . . . our boys obtained a great supply of Tobacco, Sugar, and other things in Jackson, Miss., without money and without price, that is by the common mode of confiscating."

The next day they left camp and started on the Vicksburg Road, and he observed, "we heard cannonading when we started, but as we neared this place the din increased when suddenly we halted in view of one of those terrible yet grand spectacles presented by an army moving into a fight. For miles the long lines with terrific shouts and yells rushed upon the foes. Very soon our time came. Gen. Hovey's had been driven back by rebels. We were ordered in on double quick to support Hovey. Facing storms of shot the gallant 3rd Brigade moved forward and halted within a few paces of the enemy and behind the crest of a ridge. There we stood for two hours, when we were relieved by the 2nd Brigade and the enemy driven in wild disorder from the field. Our brigade lost 570 men, 15 per cent of them being from our regiment. The field is covered with heaps of slain. The enemy have disappeared in the direction of Vicksburg . . . Some of my best soldiers were killed."

On May 18, the rebels destroyed bridges retreating to Vicksburg, but the Northern army built pontoon bridges as they marched after them. The next day near the rebel works he reported they were "lying flat on the ground behind the crest of a hill. Storms of shot and shell fly over our heads."

DOROTHY J. CLARK

The actual Siege of Vicksburg began May 22 . . . "today a grand assault was made upon the rebel works all along the line. We were repulsed with great loss. The assault never would have been made but for the eagerness of aspiring Colonels to be made Brigadier Generals. Many of those aspirants forfeited their lives as penalty of their folly. Col. George B. Boomer commanding our brigade was killed and the command devolved upon Col. Putnam, a rash, worthless and drunken officer who insisted on his men's plunging on the enemy's bayonets but to no purpose for the brigade was ordered back by higher authority."

"Today, May 25, the rebels sent out a flag of truce requesting us to bury our dead left in front of their works on the 22nd. Hostilities were suspended while parties were sent out to collect and bury our dead. Quite a pleasant conversation took place between our fellows and the rebels — both parties coming out from behind their rifle pits and talking freely and exchanging papers. At eight o'clock the truce expired and not a rebel could be seen above the walls."

Lt. Morris continued to be very outspoken in his beliefs. He wrote, "Why were the dead permitted to lie three days without burial? Gen. Grant should have asked permission on the evening of the 22nd to carry off his dead . . . perhaps many were NOT dead THEN. Oh! This Demon of War!"

"After dark the men go up to the hill top to watch 'Bombs bursting in air!' Mortar boats throw 13-inch shells into Vicksburg, a fiery sight."

On the night of May 28, Morris took 100 men to a point within 350 yards of the enemy's battleline and with pick and shovel constructed three bastions for the sixth Wisconsin Battery. Full bombardment was going on day and night. The men could see buildings in Vicksburg burning, and deserters were coming over from the rebel lines.

Finally on July 4, 1863 . . . "Glory for this day! Vicksburg has surrendered and the Stars and Stripes once more float from its walls never to be taken down by rebel hands. This Fourth must be forever memorable in American history as the first great step towards putting down this great rebellion . . ." Astronauts were not the first Americans to speak of "great steps, etc. . ."

On July 13 they broke camp near Borina and marched to Champion Hills . . . "this is the scene of our terrific fight on the 16th of May. Everything bears the mark of that day's struggle . . . trees are all cut up . . . the fields are covered with the carcasses of dead horses and in many places the heavy rains have washed the dirt off the bodies of soldiers, leaving their bones exposed to view."

From July 25 to Sept. 11, Company A was assigned guard picket duty on the street corners while the residents were returning to Vicksburg. Many of the men went home on thirty-day furloughs. It was a long hot summer during August.

On Sept. 12, the Seventh Division boarded a steamer and started up river, a slow process because the river was so low and they needed to take on wood frequently. After landing at Helena, Ark., Morris had a severe case of the ague, but arrived in Memphis by steamer on Sept. 30.

Again his [illegible] spoke out against authority. When he wrote, "we had hoped we might stay here in Memphis, but an aspiring brigadier is anxious to make us earn on the field another star for his shoulder. . ." On Oct. 3 they took the train to Corinth, Miss., and camped at Glendale which the men renamed "Dismal Hollow." The next day he had another attack of the ague.

Spending a great deal of the time on foraging expedditions, Morris wrote of being in Dixon Station, Ala., Chickasaw, Ala. on the Tennessee River, and at Waterloo, Ala. By Nov. 8, at Fayetteville, Tenn., he was so ill he rode in the ambulance heading for the Nashville Railroad.

The second volume of his diary ends, and the third volume begins Nov. 16, 1863, in the Cumberland Mountains, then to Bridgeport, Ala., Chattanooga, Tenn., past Lookout Mountain, Mission Ridge, Ga., where "the rattle of musketry exceeds anything I ever heard."

Next week's column will complete the diary of Lieut. Morris telling of his capture and life in the Confederate prison.

Ta JAN 12 1975

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The Civil War Diary of Indiana Infantry Private

Ts AUG 3 1975

History (Ind) Civil War Letters and Diaries

Community Affairs File

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

All Civil War diaries have many similarities, but they are as different in their content as the men who wrote them. One diary of local interest was kept by a private in Company D, Thirty-First Indiana Infantry, from the time of enlistment, Aug. 6, 1861 to an unexplained stopping point Jan. 6, 1863.

On Aug. 6 the group went to Indianapolis to spend the night "in great hilarity" at Camp Sullivan. The next day they moved to Camp Morton. "The boys are very awkward cooking . . . get along very well."

Aug. 12 — "Returned to Sullivan and commenced the work of recruiting our company in order to get ready to go to Camp Vigo at Terre Haute, Ind." And on Aug. 20 — "Company met . . . prepared to go to Terre Haute by railroad but received a dispatch from the Adjutant General of State ot to come until the quarters were fixed."

The next day the men "left Sullivan by private conveyance for Camp Vigo, arrived at camp after a pleasant day's ride . . . weather very warm."

DOROTHY J. CLARK

On Sept. 15, they were sworn into the U.S. Service by Lieut. Col. Wood after the company was raised to the required number. Sept. 28 — "Left Camp Vigo for Evansville at midnight" arriving there at 8 o'clock the next day.

After the first of October, the men received marching orders and got aboard a steamboat for Henderson, Ky., where they pitched tents in an old lot in the east part of the city.

On Oc. 16, 1861, Company D and Company K of the 31st Indiana and 25 men from the 25th Ky. were ordered on a scouting expedition into Webster County. They marched eleven miles, stayed overnight in a tobacco house, and marched back. This type of maneuvering kept the recruits busy until Feb. 14, 1862, when they landed near Fort Donalson and took their position about half a mile from the enemy's works. The weather was very cold and snow falling fast and the men were not allowed to sleep. About daylight on Feb. 15, "the enemy made a bold dash and turned our extreme right at the same time vigoroulsy attacking our whole right wing. They were checked along the whole line excepting the extreme right. Here the conflict was dreadful, but our men were gradually being driven back, but gallantly contesting every inch of ground. Their ammunition was nearly expended . . . we were ordered to the right for reinforcements, advanced on double quick with the 25th Ky. in advance but owing to some misunderstanding they were run almost into the enemy's ranks. They fired a dreadful volley and the men fell back in great confusion. We tried to form but owing to the nature of the ground could not before the enemy were among us.

Co. K, Co. D and Co. B formed and held the enemy in check until the rest of the regiment fell back and formed on a hill about 100 yards in the rear, when we fell back and took our position in the line, but we were again compelled to fall back and take our position where we lay until 4 o'clock when we were reinforced by Gen. Wallace's division when we again advanced and drove the enemy nto his works in great haste. We then fell back and rested for the night."

Feb. 16 — "The enemy surrendered at day light this morning. We were among the first in town. The victory is complete. We captured 1,320 prisoners and 100 pieces of artillery and several thousand stand of arms and immense commissary stores."

After this battle, the men marched to Fort Henry on the Tennessee river, then on to Pittsburgh Landing, eight miles above Savannah. On April 4, "the pickets were attacked and sharp fighting ensued . . . the enemy were repulsed with considerable loss." Two days later the diarist reported "desperate fighting all day. We were driven to within a half mile of the Landing. Gen. Buell arrived with reinforcements . . . the enemy is checked . . . great loss on both sides."

The fighting resumed on April 7 and the Union soldiers drove the enemy slowly back. . . Company D suffered one man killed, 8 wounded, and one of them died later.

On April 23 the men were transferred into Gen. Nelson's Division, 22nd Brigade, Army of the Ohio, and received orders at dress parade to move out the following morning. By the middle of May, they were making camp and erecting breastworks near Corinth, Miss., where they were engaged in heavy skirmish.

Following orders they mar-

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Dorothy Clark

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Continued From Page 1.

ched, camped, back and forth across the south until June 25 they found "the Sullivan boys in the 13th Indiana all well and in fine spirits" at Tuscumbia. After a summer of marching, riding railroad cars and waiting for new orders, by August, 1862, they were back in the Nashville area. "Captain Walls received his resignation and went home."

Other than a few minor skirmishes, the men did not see any real action until Oct. 8, 1862 when there was heavy skirmishing and cannonading on the Springfield road near Perryville. The men slept on their arms all night. The rest of the month was spent "driving the enemy's pickets before us as the Rebels retreated."

On Oct. 17 they were ascending Wildcat Mountain, still pursuing the Rebels. They captured 200 beef cattle and 100 prisoners, before marching on to the Cumberland Gap. By Oct. 25 the snow was six inches deep, several of the boys were

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barefooted and without blankets and nearly froze to death.

By Nov. 1 they pitched their tents for the first time in weeks, got their knapsacks and changed their clothes for the first time since they left Bolwing Green, Ky. While in camp at Silver Springs, Samuel Harley died of lung fever on Nov. 17. There was a heavy skirmish with the enemy's cavalry on Dec. 26, but "the 31st and 1st carried Stone river by a charge . . . no one hurt in the 31st."

From Dec. 29 on to New Year's Eve the men were heavily attacked at the Battle of Murfreesboro, but after a hard fight the enemy evacuated the town and fell back toward Chattanooga.

January 4 — "Lay in woods near our works all day. A great many dead in the field not buried yet. Our troops occupied the town."

January 5 — "Moved camp back of the battle field a mile awaiting our trains from Nashville." And the final entry in the diary: Jan. 6 — "Moved camp three miles from town on the McMinnville Pike . . ."

AUG 3 1975

Part III, Civil War Diary Of Lt. William M. Morris

Te JAN 19 1975

Commu[illegible]

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Te JAN 19 1975

The preceding two weeks' columns have told of the Civil War experiences of Lt. William M. Morris, Company A, 93rd Illinois Volunteers. This conclusion tells of his being taken prisoner at Chickamauga Station, Ga. on Nov. 25, 1863. The next day he was marched to the rear 38 miles in 24 hours. Each man was given two crackers the first day, four per man the next night after a 10-mile march. The officers were put in an old house full of fodder and slept well. Twelve more miles to Calhoun, Ga., they were put in the Courthouse which was unheated and they nearly froze to death . . . still on four crackers per man per day!

Put on open railroad cars on Nov. 29, they traveled 60 miles in 10 hours and arrived in Atlanta, Ga. Two of the guards did freeze to death, and there were no rations. Here the party of 400 officers and men from the [illegible] Iowa, 73rd Pa., 26th Mo., 10th Iowa and 93rd Ill. were crowded in barracks scarcely large enough for 50 men.

On Dec. 3 they were sent on the train to Charlotte, N.C. where a party of "ladies and gentlemen came to the railroad station to see the Yankees and using contemptuous and insulting language to the prisoners."

On Dec. 8, 1863, Morris reached Libby Prison at Richmond, Va., and was quartered in a large three-story brick building formerly used as a tobacco warehouse and owned by the firm of "Libby & Son." 1,200 officers were confined here, and 12,000 privates were confined in Belle Island and other prisons in Richmond.

DOROTHY J. CLARK

On Dec. 15, he reported that the Rebel congress was in session, and some of the prisoners managed to get newspapers. To pass the time the prisoners tried to study, played games, and made music to keep their minds off their situation. Their rations on Dec. 19 consisted of cornbread, fresh beef, rice, beans and salt. The men had to cook their own food.

At intervals Morris reported in his diary that he was troubled with toothache. There was only half enough wood to keep warm and Richmond's weather was cold with snow that Christmas of 1863. At intervals a few officers would be exchanged for rebel prisoners held in the north . . . a boat would arrive with a certain number of Southerners and a like number of Northerners would be released to board the boat and head north. Morris was not one of the lucky ones.

New Year's Day, 1864, the Sanitary Commission sent supplies of roast beef in cans, dried beef and hams, condensed milk, chocolate, coffee, etc., from the Philadelphia Agency.

There read this interesting notation on Jan. 8 — "Gen. John H. Morgan is in the city and is being feted by the rebel authorities. He escaped from the Ohio Penitentiary by cunning and bribery and rebeldom generally is in raptures over the event."

Several officers from the 16th Illinois Cavalry taken in eastern Tennessee arrived at Libby. New prisoners brought the latest war news. This added to the card playing, chess and reading. By Jan. 18 the men were living on cornbread.

Rations of Feb. 5 consisted of one pound of turnips and cornbread per man. Morris reported the "windows are all without glass and the cold wind sweeps through the prison bars . . . think of 180 men in a room 100 by 36 feet with but one stove to gather around at night . . . we sleep on the floor shivering in the

Continued On Page 5, Col. 1.

over

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Continued From Page 4.

light blankets which we happen to possess . . ."

On March 1, he reported: "Richmond is in an uproar. Bells are ringing, and the militia are hurrying to their places of rendezvous. The cause is an extensive cavalry raid of our forces under Gen. Kilpatrick . . . troops came within three miles of Richmond and threw a few shells into the rebel camps. We could hear the cannonading and were prepared to break out when any of our forces came into the city." A week later he added, "the recent raids to rescue us have exasperated the rebels to such a degree that they have placed powder under the prison determined in the vent of an attack upon the city to blow us up rather than see us rescued by our friends."

The situation became so desperate that on May 7 the order came to leave Libby Prison, and the men were put on board railroad cars for Danville, Va. Each man was issued one pound of cornbread, no more, on arrival and quartered in two large brick buildings five miles from the North Carolina line. The food was better here in this tobacco warehouse. On May 11 the escape plan was thwarted when 885 more officers were brought in from Libby Prison

In an obvious move to keep the prisoners busy and away from all hope of help and rescue, the Southern authorities kept them on the move. On May 12 they left Danville on the railroad for 30 miles and then marched eight more before they camped en route to Georgia.

On May 14 they were put on cattle cars and given three day's rations, 50 men to a car, reaching the Macon, Ga., fairgrounds to be confined in open tents. Here they were divided into squads of 100 men each with five messes to a squad. Morris' squad was No. 6. Mess 4 . . . there were over 1,000 officers herded into this camp prison. On May 19 they commenced digging a tunnel and 100 feet later were discovered on May 21.

Items of interest found in the diary included the rate of exchange which was $7 confederate money for $1 Union Greenback. A spool of cotton thread sold for $20 confed. At this time, June 9, 1864, the men were issued rations for four days. He received six pints of cornmeal, 1¼ pounds salt pork, 1 ½ tablespoons salt, ¼ pint of rice and ¼ pint of bread.

The diary ends with this nostalgic comment, "Chaplain preached a good, loyal Methodist sermon . . . one peculiar part of a Methodist meeting was wanting, namely the children. It has been months since we heard a child cry."

Dr. Minnis tells me the family has never been able to locate the fourth diary which would have continued from July, 1864, until Morris was released from Confederate prison and returned to Illinois.

From other family papers it was learned that William Martin Morris was born in 1837 in Rock Island, Ill., and died in 1906, aged 69 years, from an infected ax wound, and is buried in Asheville, N.C.

Morris married first in 1860 at Camden Mills, Rock Island County, Ill., Jemima Heflin who was born in 1841. Their children were Jessie Fremont Crane Morris, born 1841; Louise Mable Knapp, born 1866; Sarah Ellen Morris, born 1875; and John, born 1879. These were the four children living in 1898 when the pension record was filed. According to these records he was paroled from prison and sent home to resume his command in May, 1865. He was out of the army in June, 1865. In 1898 he lived in Woodline, Harrison County, Iowa.

A farmer and cattle drover before his army service, he was listed as partly disabled and the son of William Morris, born 1803. The mother's name was not given. He was apparently the youngest of the family. There was Samuel, born 1825; Daniel Allen, born 1827; Cynthia Ann, born 1830; Hannah Amanda, born 1832; and William Martin, born 1837, the Civil War diary keeper who survived Libby Prison to die from an infection caused by an ax on his leg.

that is

Dorothy Clark

Newcomers — of 100 years ago,

Ts SEP 2 1 1980

Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark

The Vandalia Railroad shops attracted many people to Terre Haute in 1880. One of these newcomers was Jefferson Caleb Kelley, who became superintendent of air brakes. What many people did not know was that Kelley had served four and a half years in the Civil War and was awarded the bronze medal for gallant service by the General Assembly of Ohio.

Kelley enlisted April 20, 1861, in Mount Vernon, Ohio, at the age of 19 years, although he was helping support his widowed mother and nine children. Used to hard work since he was 13, the husky youth had a healthy constitution that enabled him to endure the campaigns of the Fourth Ohio Volunteers and then the Twentieth Ohio until the end of the war.

Kelley was at Fort Donelson, then the Shiloh campaign, which turned the raw recruits into hardened veterans. Then came Corinth, the Iuqua, and then the trenches before Vicksburg. During these actions Kelley and his comrades went through experiences that left many of the men in the hospital or made deserters out of them.

On the march to Vicksburg, the Union forces encountered the determined opposition of the Confederates. Each day the advancing Union men would advance, engage in fierce battles and dig in for the next day's push. Each position that the rebels occupied was stormed and taken by the northerners.

On May 16, the Union army had Vicksburg surrounded and the army of the Mississippi cooped up inside the lines of fortification, but the capturing of the city was another proposition.

Kelley was in the thick of the work, as the Union men gradually pushed their trenches nearer and nearer. All of the building of the breastworks and the digging of the trenches was done under a heavy fire from the rebels. A trench was built, a brief rest and another trench dug a few yards in advance. A siege of a city is a terrible war maneuver, both sides get no rest or sleep, the death toll was high, and food supply and sanitary conditions non-existent.

The end came July 4, 1863, when a white flag was raised over the walls of Vicksburg and the siege was over. It was during this time that Kelley's second enlistment expired, and he reenlisted. Granted a short furlough, he made a quick trip home before joining his outfit in time to take part in the Atlanta campaign. His regiment was assigned to the Seventeenth Army Corps, Third Division, Second Brigade, of the Army of West Tennessee, and with Thomas leading them they were hot on the trail of Gen. Hood.

Through a series of long, hard marches and fierce fighting, they participated in Kenesaw Mountain, Marietta, Burnt Hickory, Jonesville, and Peach Tree Creek. Nearly every day saw some skirmishes, but Kenesaw Mountain caused the heaviest loss among the Ohio veterans.

The entire march on Atlanta was one continuous fight. On July 22 the Union forces won the victory and Atlanta was theirs. Major-General J. B. McPherson was killed while leading the column that Kelley was fighting in.

After Atlanta came the pursuit of Gen. Hood, and he was driven out of Georgia. Next the 17th was sent to Sherman, and they participated in his famous march to the sea. During the trying march through the swamps, many of the men weakened by hunger, became sick and disheartened but struggled on. Kelley's remarkable strength carried him through in better shape than most of the men, and he was in the head of the Union column when they marched into Savannah.

From here they marched to Columbus, Goldburg, then Raleigh and on to Richmond. Following the fall of Richmond and Lee's surrender, the entire Sherman brigade was sent to Washington before going to Louisville to be mustered out Oct. 25, 1865.

Corporal To Civilian

Jefferson C. Kelley was employed by the Vandalia shortly after leaving the army and worked with them for 32 years, retiring on pension at the age of 70 years. In 1913 he was still hale and hearty.

Kelley had married Hannah Johnson, a school teacher who was born in Poughkeepsie, N. Y. in 1844, in St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Mount Vernon, Ohio, in 1867. At her death in 1913, three of their four children survived. They were Frank A. Kelley, local attorney; Fred J. Kelley of the Vandalia Railroad, and Ola Daniels, all of Terre Haute. The family lived at 630 S. Seventh St. for many years.

I'm indebted to Harold W. Kelley, 1234 N. 10th St., son of Fred J., and a grandson of the Civil War veteran, who loaned several clippings, photos and early records of his family for this bit of local

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Vigo war hero died at Gettysburg battle

Soldiers (T H)

Ts MAY 15 1983

Historically speaking

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Only the full dress uniform coat of dark blue, single-breasted, with a row of brass buttons, captain's bars on the shoulders, and a dashing red sash draped across one shoulder ending on the left hip in fringed tassels, along with the dark blue formal dress coat worn for social occasions remain to remind museum visitors of the Civil War hero John J. P. Blinn who died at Gettysburg.

The formal coat is double-breasted with embroidered black satin covered buttons, very high-waisted in front, with long tails. The outfit included huge gold epaulets and a richly ornamented dress sword. The size of the uniforms indicated a tall, thin man described in earlier days as "pigeon-breasted."

Capt. Blinn was honored by having G.A.R. Blinn Post No. 85 at Prairieton named for him in 1885 when it was organized with 18 members.

After collecting dust for years at Memorial Hall, Capt. Blinn's effects were given to the Historical Museum of the Wabash Valley for display in the military room.

His father, Horace Blinn, was born in 1801 in Wethersfield, Conn. He started west about 1824 following the birth of his first son, Frederick Wilson Blinn. The first wife, Cornelia G. Fuller, died soon after reaching Indiana.

Mr. Blinn married Julia Bishop as his second wife in 1832. Their two children were Amory Kinney Blinn, who later served in the army, and Horace Frederick Blinn who died at age seven. His second wife died in 1835, and Mr. Blinn went to California for three years.

He married the third time Dorothea Froment of New York City. She had six children, all of whom lived to maturity except one: Charlotte E., John J.P., Horace Jr., Julia, Sarah who died in 1850, and Sarah D.

Mr. Blinn died in 1860, accidentally killed on a hunting trip with several men near Merom, Sullivan Co., Ind.

John J. P. Blinn was born in the old Blinn homestead, known later as 433 N. Third St. His early education was received in local schools, and he was attending Wabash College, at Crawfordsville when the Civil War broke out.

Having excelled in military drill at college, he assisted in raising a company and went into Camp Vigo, north of Terre Haute, where they were mustered into Company F, 14th Regiment, Indiana Volunteer Infantry. He was made adjutant of regiment and served until October, 1862, when he was commissioned captain and A.A.G., serving on brigade staff of Gen. Nathan Kimball and Gen. Carroll, who commanded the brigade in the three days' battle of Gettysburg.

In January, 1863, he returned home for a brief time because of his health, but soon returned to duty. On July 3, 1863, he fell mortally wounded in the second day's battle at Gettysburg, repulsing the charge of Pickett's Corps, dying several days later at the field hospital at the age of 22 years. His body was brought home for burial in the family plot in Woodlawn Cemetery.

Ironically, this gallant young Union officer who had fought in 14 battles, is buried only a short distance from the Circle where the monument was placed in memory of the Confederate soldiers who died here as prisoners of war. His tombstone is broken and should be repaired.

No county in Indiana responded more promptly than did Vigo County in the first call for 75,000 volunteers by President Abraham Lincoln. When Governor Morton issued the call, first to respond and muster into service from Terre Haute and Vigo County were Company C and Company D, 11th Indiana Volunteers.

Camp Vigo was immediately organized on North Seventh Street just north of Maple Avenue where an early fairgrounds was located. The stables and stock pens were converted into barracks by clearing out the old straw and putting in new for the men. The first three-year regiment organized here was the 14th Indiana in May, 1861.

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Medal of Honor

Clark, Dorothy ~~Soldiers~~ Community Affairs File

Peter J. Ryan received

T s MAY 2 7 1984

Historically speaking

Clark is Vigo County's official historian and formerly worked for The Terre Haute Tribune.

By Dorothy Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

One of the very few men to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in the Civil War was a Terre Haute resident, Peter John Ryan.

He was born in Ireland in 1844 and emigrated to America with his parents when he was 7-years-old. His mother died on the trip across, his father died shortly after arrival, leaving him an orphan. Young Ryan was sent to the home of an aunt in Dayton, Ohio.

In 1856 Ryan came to Terre Haute as a 12-year-old apprentice in a harness shop, but left that trade to enter the army at the outbreak of the Civil War. He was only 17-years-old, not really old enough to enlist, but being large for his age, he managed to get away with it.

P. J. Ryan enlisted first in Company I, 11th Regiment, Indiana Volunteer Infantry, and "rendered valiant service and was offered the command of his company. He declined this honor, however, feeing it would be better for the company if someone older should assume authority, and continued to serve all during the war as a private."

Ryan distinguished himself by his bravery several times, but one particular act of bravery during the battle of Winchester, Va., on Sept. 19, 1864, was witnessed by General Philip H. Sheridan.

Inspired by the guerrilla tactics of the infamous Confederate officer Moseby, Ryan donned a Confederate uniform and worked his way in with a group of Confederate stragglers. Finding himself with 13 of them, he said, "Boys, let's give them another volley." The Rebs fired and then he revealed himself to them and marched them off as prisoners of war to Union headquarters.

For this act of gallantry he was awarded the coveted Congressional Medal of Honor by the government. It was in the same engagement that he rescued a comrade who had been captured. The official records state that "Pvt. Peter J. Ryan, Co. D., 11th Ind. Inf., on Sept. 19, 1864, for the capture of 14 Confederates in severest part of battle of Winchester, Va., was awarded the Medal of Honor."

In the Battle of Winchester on the Opequon River, the 11th Indiana suffered few casualities compared to some of the other outfits. One officer, Lt. William S. Mullen, and seven enlisted men were killed; two officers and 56 men were wounded; and one officer and three men were captured and taken prisoner.

Major-General Sheridan's report to Lt. General Grant of the same date stated that "I have the honor to report that I attacked the forces of General Early on the Berryville Pike at the crossing of Opequon Creek, and after a most stubborn and sanguinary (bloody) engagement, which lasted from early morning until five o'clock in the evening, completly defeated him, and, driving him through Winchester, capturing about 2,500 prisoners, five pieces of artillery, nine army flags, and most of their wounded ... The conduct of the officers and men was most superb. They charged and carried every position taken up by the rebels from Opequon Creek to Winchester. The enemy were very strong in number and very obstinate in their fighting ... "

The first Congressional Medal of Honor was awarded to Gen. George

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Washington March 25, 1776, for the capture of Boston. In 1862, Congress authorized 2,000 such medals to be prepared for Civil Warpresentations. The Congressional Medal of Honor is presented by the President, in the name of Congress, to anyone in the armed services who distinguishes himself by conspicuous heroism in combat with the enemy, at the risk of his life and beyond the call of duty. The award carried with it a pay increase of two dollars a month and a salute from all military personnel.

At the end of the Civil War, Peter J. Ryan returned to Terre Haute where he went into business manufacturing and selling harness until 1875 when he sold out and opened a livery business. Horse-drawn hearses and carriages for mourners were an integral part of the undertaker's business, so Ryan's next logical step up was into the funeral director's business.

Ryan married Mary E. Maloney in 1868, and they had eight children, but only the widow and four children, Frank M., Charles P., Gertrude and Blanche, survived him at his death in 1908. Owing to ill health, he made Frank a business partner in 1899 and Charles a partner in 1903. He remained president of the undertaking business until his death.

Ryan's Congressional Medal of Honor hangs in the foyer of the P. J. Ryan Funeral Home, 602 S. Seventh St. The initials are the same for the present owner, Patrick J. Ryan, great-grandson of the Civil War hero. Matted on wine-red velvet and framed under glass in a lovely antique gold frame, the medal and citation bear witness to Peter J. Ryan's heroism. He was very modest about his war accomplishments and seldom talked about them. Few people in Terre Haute knew he had received this highest award. Ryan was the only Terre Hautean to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor in the Civil War.

Attorney Charles Cruft left for military glory during Civil War times

AUG 28 1988

Clark, Dorothy

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column for 30 years. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

Charles Cruft (1826-1883), a young lawyer interested in military history, had addressed the historical society in the early 1850s on Fort Harrison and its brilliant defense by Capt. Zachary Taylor.

Little did he realize that his deeds during the Civil War would overshadow that earlier incident.

The 31st Indiana Regiment was organized by Cruft, who was its first colonel, and was mustered into service Sept. 5, 1861, at Camp Vigo at the old fairgrounds on North Seventh Street, immediately across from today's Collett Park.

After two battles, Fort Donelson and Shiloh, he was promoted to the command of the brigade, and from that rose to major general. The 31st was in his brigade while he was brigade commander, and was under him also as division commander. President Harrison was a brigade commander under Gen. Cruft, and a warm friendship developed.

Cruft was the only officer from Vigo County to attain the rank of major general. It was conferred personally upon him by President Abraham Lincoln on his visit to Washington in March 1865, after he delivered to Gen. W.T. Sherman the troops from his division of the Army of the Cumberland.

When Cruft and his regiment left Camp Vigo, they reported to Richmond, Ky., where he first showed his bravery by riding in advance of their shattered lines, under murderous fire, to encourage his troops in their vain effort to check the enemy.

Then hurrying forward to report to Brig. Gen. Grant at Fort Donelson, they planted their standard far in advance. This turning point in events was due to Col. Cruft's ability as a commander and fighter.

Cruft's brigade went into action near Dover. Here the rebels made their desperate attempt to turn the battle and open a way out to retreat to Nashville. They were unsuccessful.

His men remained in position on a ridge and repelled continued assaults, and finally charged the rebel lines. The enemy advanced with infantry and cavalry, but Cruft's cool mind and masterly hand led slowly back to a higher position, where the rebels followed and charged, only to be met with a sheet of fire.

At Stone River he received his brigadier's star and was placed in command of four regiments of Palmer's division, and held a place in the line between Miller's and Hazen's brigades. Cruft repulsed Gen. Chalmer's heavy forces, and the next day supported Miller's brigade in turning the rebel Breckenridge's movement.

At terrible Chickamauga, Cruft and his command were the last to leave the field, and then on foot as his horse had been shot.

Finally, at Mission Ridge he took two brigades of the 4th Corps and reported to Hooker down in the valley, and with others joined in climbing the ridge and sweeping it clean of rebels.

Cruft gained the summit, capturing the wagons and ambulances after a sharp contest. When he ran up against rebel breastworks, he gave the command to charge, and the works were carried almost before the bugle command died away.

Cruft continued until the close of the war at Resaca, Kenesaw Mountain and Atlanta with Sherman, as one of his reliable division commanders, and back to Nashville, where he came into line on the left in time to save the results of the wonderfully strong fighting done by the black men under Steadman.

Mustered out at the close of the war, Gen. Cruft returned to Terre Haute and resumed his law practice with his former partner, Col. John P. Baird, who also had fought in the war.

From 1861 to 1872 he owned the "Wabash Express," and was one of the heaviest taxpayers of the city and county — $391.62 in one year. He was a stockholder of Vigo Iron Furnace in 1870, and was associated with Chauncey Rose when Rose Polytechnic Institute was established.

He is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery with his parents, John F. Cruft (1800-1862) and Elizabeth A. (1805-1852). His brother, Edward Cruft, presented a portrait of his famous brother to the Morton Post, Grand Army of the Republic, to be hung in its headquarters, later known as Memorial Hall on Ohio Street.

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